

NEWS ARTICLES ON KEY ISSUES - APRIL 8, 2021

LATEST NEWS

Commentary: Seeking Humane Solutions To Immigration

By Archbishop Gustavo Garcia-Siller, San Antonio Express-News, April 6, 2021

- ❖ The bishops along the border of the United States and Northern Mexico issued a joint statement on the situation at the border at the beginning of April.

As U.S. and Mexican bishops along the border, we constantly witness the dilemma that our migrant sisters and brothers face. We know that for most, the decision to migrate is not motivated by an indifference toward their homeland or the pursuit of economic prosperity; it is a matter of life or death. The situation is all the more difficult for children.

Families with small children are walking more than 1,000 miles from Central America through Mexico to flee gang violence and cartels, and seek security. They arrive with literally nothing but the clothes on their backs. Due to the Remain in Mexico policy, they have camped in tents and shelters across the border for 18 months, awaiting their turn to seek asylum through appropriate channels. The Texas border bishops have noted that many turn themselves into Border Patrol because they want to enter the United States properly.

Imagine as a parent what conditions would have to be like for you to walk 1,000 miles with your three or four children, younger than 6, and then camp for a year in extreme weather by a mosquito-infested river — just for a chance at safety, security, work and education.

San Antonio is serving as a temporary home to about 1,500 young men and boys — unaccompanied minors — who, for the most part, are seeking to unite with family members in the United States. The Freeman Coliseum and surrounding building are housing these youth who have come from Honduras, Guatemala, El Salvador, Ecuador, Nicaragua and a few other countries.

I was blessed to celebrate Easter Sunday Mass for these boys, most of whom had not been able to attend a liturgy for many months. They have incredible faith.

I have worked with migrants for more than 30 years, and I have never been to a location in which I witnessed such outstanding service, kindness and ministry of presence from all involved — from the government agencies, Catholic Charities, the many volunteers and the staff. It was incredible, and I am very grateful. I was able to pray with them and even play soccer. Some of the older boys are very good.

There have been alarming phrases used to describe the situation at the border, but the current number of migrants is consistent with spring migration patterns. The presence of cartels and traffickers is also greatly exaggerated.

Challenges regarding immigration require humanitarian solutions. Undoubtedly, nations have the right to maintain their borders. This is vital to sovereignty and self-determination. At the same time, there is a shared responsibility of all nations to preserve human life and provide for safe, orderly and humane immigration, including the right to asylum.

For that reason, the U.S. and Mexico bishops appealed to our governments, political leaders and civil society to work together to welcome, protect, promote and integrate migrants in accordance with their intrinsic dignity, as well as work with other countries in the region to eliminate conditions that compel their citizens to resort to dangerous and irregular migration, producing long-term solutions.

We maintain that family unity must be a vital component of any response. We ask that special attention be given to particularly vulnerable populations, such as children. We must be with them. We strongly urge that structures be put in place and reforms in our laws be made to both promote a welcoming culture for our sisters and brothers and respect the sovereignty and safety of our countries.

We bishops pledge our support to continue helping our respective governments' efforts to protect and care for families, as well as individuals who feel compelled to migrate. To accomplish this we commit to the ongoing work of Catholic organizations — such as Catholic Charities — at the border and elsewhere, which are generously tended to by laypeople, consecrated persons and the clergy.

- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.expressnews.com/opinion/commentary/article/Commentary-Seeking-humane-solutions-to-16080922.php>
- ❖ To read the joint statement issued by bishops along the U.S./Mexico border, go to: <https://www.usccb.org/news/2021/situation-us-mexico-border>

Situation At The U.S.-Mexico Border

By the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), Public Affairs Office, April 1, 2021

- ❖ The bishops along the border of the United States and Northern Mexico have issued a joint statement on the situation at the border of the two countries. Their joint statement follows:

As U.S. and Mexican bishops along the border, we witness daily the dilemma that our migrant sisters and brothers face. For most, the decision to migrate is not motivated by an indifference toward their homeland or the pursuit of economic prosperity; it is a matter of life or death. The situation is all the more difficult for children.

Challenges such as these require humanitarian solutions. Undoubtedly, nations have the right to maintain their borders. This is vital to their sovereignty and self-determination. At the same time, there is a shared responsibility of all nations to preserve human life and provide for safe, orderly, and humane immigration, including the right to asylum.

For that reason, we renew our appeal to our governments, to political leaders, and civil society, that they work together to welcome, protect, promote, and integrate migrants in accordance with their intrinsic dignity, as well as work with other countries in the region to eliminate conditions that compel their citizens to resort to dangerous and irregular migration, producing long-term solutions. “Unlike disagreement and conflict,” Pope Francis reminds us, “persistent and courageous dialogue does not make headlines, but quietly helps the world to live much better than we imagine.”

Conscious of the importance of public health and safety, we encourage policies supported by sound scientific rationales. We maintain that family unity must be a vital component of any response. We ask that special attention be given to particularly vulnerable populations, such as children. We strongly urge that structures be put in place and reforms in our laws be made to both promote a welcoming culture for our sisters and brothers and respect the sovereignty and safety of our countries.

We pledge our support to continue helping our respective governments’ efforts to protect and care for families, as well as individuals who feel compelled to migrate. To accomplish this we commit to the ongoing work of Catholic organizations at the border and elsewhere, which are generously tended to by lay people, consecrated persons, and the clergy.

One year ago, on the eve of Easter Sunday, Pope Francis, exclaimed: “How beautiful it is to be Christians who offer consolation, who bear the burdens of others and who offer encouragement: messengers of life in a time of death.” As we once again enter into Holy Week, in which we experience the power of love in Christ’s Death and Resurrection, we feel encouraged to keep going, helping migrants, conscious that while the way ahead is long and arduous, it is not impossible if we journey together.

- ❖ Source: <https://www.usccb.org/news/2021/situation-us-mexico-border>

U.S. Bishops

- ❖ Most Reverend Mario E. Dorsonville
Auxiliary Bishop of Washington
Chairman, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’
Committee on Migration
- ❖ Most Reverend Mark J. Seitz
Bishop of El Paso
- ❖ Most Reverend James A. Tamayo
Bishop of Laredo
- ❖ Most Reverend Edward J. Weisenburger
Bishop of Tucson
- ❖ Most Reverend Daniel E. Flores
Bishop of Brownsville
- ❖ Most Reverend Peter Baldacchino
Bishop of Las Cruces
- ❖ Most Reverend Robert W. McElroy
Bishop of San Diego
- ❖ Most Reverend Michael J. Sis
Bishop of San Angelo
- ❖ Most Reverend Gustavo Garcia-Siller, MSPS
Archbishop of San Antonio

Mexican Bishops

- ❖ Monsignor José Guadalupe Torres Campos
Bishop of Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua
Encargado de la Dimensión Episcopal de Pastoral de la
Movilidad Humana (DEPMH)
- ❖ Monsignor Jesús José Herrera Quiñones
Bishop of Nuevo Casas Grandes, Chihuahua
- ❖ Monsignor Alonso Garza Treviño
Bishop of Piedras Negras, Coahuila
- ❖ Monsignor Enrique Sánchez Martínez
Bishop of Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas
- ❖ Monsignor Eugenio Andrés Lira Rugarcía
Bishop of Matamoros, Tamaulipas
- ❖ Monsignor Hilario González García
Bishop of Saltillo, Coahuila



Central American migrants looked through the fence near the El Chaparral border crossing in Tijuana, Mexico.
Credit: Guillermo Arias/Agence France-Presse/Getty Images

State Officials Didn't Receive 'Sexual Assault' Complaints At The Freeman Coliseum Migrant Shelter

By Brian Chasnoff, Jacob Beltran, San Antonio Express-News, April 9, 2021

- ❖ Allegations of abuse and neglect of migrant children at the Freeman Coliseum shelter raised by Gov. Greg Abbott stemmed from complaints of “sexual acting out” by teenage boys at the facility, as well as the bullying of children “who may be homosexual,” state officials said. Abbott, in a letter Friday [Apr. 9] to Vice President Kamala Harris, repeated his demand to close the shelter based on “allegations of sexual assault, a shortage of staff to properly supervise the children inside the facility, and that the children in the facility are not eating throughout the day.”
- ❖ News Article Source: https://www.expressnews.com/politics/article/Details-emerge-of-complaints-of-abuse-and-neglect-16089540.php?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=SAEN_210Report&utm_term=news&utm_content=headlines&sid=5b0234e724c17c5e3d919320

Mexico's New Migrant Policy Adds To Biden's Border Woes

By Mary Beth Sheridan, Washington Post, April 11, 2021

- ❖ President Biden hoped to put the brakes on a surge of U.S.-bound Central American families by relying on a Trump-era policy [health measure called Title 42] to return them to Mexico. But increasingly, this country is straining to cope with the influx. Mexico is now limiting the number of families it will allow back. That's forced the U.S. government to accept most of them, as their numbers soar: About 53,000 members of family units were taken into custody in March, compared with 7,300 in January.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2021/04/11/mexico-migrant-crisis-border-shelters/>

Border Patrol Facilities Holding Migrant Children Are "Stretched Beyond Thin," Independent Monitor Finds

By Camilo Montoya-Galvez, CBS News, April 4, 2021

- ❖ In a report filed late Friday to the federal court in Los Angeles, two inspectors appointed by U.S. District Judge Dolly Gee to monitor conditions faced by children in U.S. immigration custody detailed "severe overcrowding" at Customs and Border Protection (CBP) facilities in south Texas. As of March 30, there were approximately 3,000 unaccompanied migrant children held at the Donna facility, including 2,500 minors who had been in Border Patrol custody beyond the 72-hour legal limit. About 500 of the unaccompanied minors were younger than 12 years of age.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/border-patrol-facilities-holding-migrant-children-stretched-beyond-thin-independent-monitor-finds/>

Border Crossings In March Jumped To Highest Level In 15 Years, Data Shows

By Nick Miroff, Washington Post, April 2, 2021

- ❖ U.S. agents took more than 171,000 migrants into custody last month [March], according to U.S. Customs and Border Protection figures. Last month [March], CBP took in more than 18,800 unaccompanied minors, a 99 percent increase from February and a figure far above the previous one-month high of 11,861 in May 2019. The jump in the number of migrants arriving as part of family groups was even steeper last month, soaring to more than 53,000, up from 19,246 in February and 7,294 in January, the preliminary figures show.
- ❖ News Article Source: https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/march-border-crossings/2021/04/02/150ee61c-93b3-11eb-9af7-fd0822ae4398_story.html

COVID-19 Cases Among Unaccompanied Migrant Children In Facilities Spark Concerns Over Crowding

By Marlene Lenthag, ABC News, March 31, 2021

- ❖ As of Mar. 30, there are 17,641 unaccompanied migrant minors in government care -- 5,606 children are in CBP custody and 12,035 in the care of the Department of Human and Health Services. From March 1 to March 30, there has been a total of 647 COVID-19 cases in 40 out of 50 Texas HHS Office of Refugee Resettlement operations.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://abcnews.go.com/Health/covid-19-cases-unaccompanied-migrant-children-facilities-spark/story?id=76788478>

Here's How You Can Help The Migrant Children Staying At The Freeman Coliseum

By Andres Picon, San Antonio Express-News, March 31, 2021

- ❖ Nearly 500 unaccompanied boys from Central America are staying temporarily at the Freeman Coliseum as they wait to be placed with family members or other sponsors, and Catholic Charities is looking for San Antonians willing to help make their stay a bit more pleasant. Individuals interested in volunteering can find instructions and a link to register at Catholic Charities' website (<https://ccaosa.org/migrant-youth-support/>). Volunteers must be 18 or older and are required to complete a criminal background check and three online training modules. Those who want to contribute in other ways can make monetary donations through the Catholic Charities website (<https://ccaosa.org/migrant-youth-support/>) or by purchasing items on Catholic Charities' Amazon wish list, which can also be found on the website (https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/3OXJU79S2WDW8?ref_=wl_share).
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.expressnews.com/news/local/article/Here-s-how-you-can-help-the-migrant-children-16067096.php>

U.S. Waives FBI Checks On Caregivers At New Migrant Facilities

By Nomaan Merchant, Associated Press, March 27, 2021

- ❖ The Biden administration is not requiring FBI fingerprint background checks of caregivers at its rapidly expanding network of emergency sites to hold thousands of immigrant teenagers, alarming child welfare experts who say the waiver compromises safety. These emergency sites don't have to be licensed by state authorities or provide the same services as permanent HHS facilities. They also cost far more, an estimated \$775 per child per day.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://abcnews.go.com/US/wireStory/us-waives-fbi-checks-caregivers-migrant-facilities-76724675>

Biden Continues To Use Title 42, A Trump-Era Immigration Policy. But He's Made One Key Change.

By Rebecca Morin, USA TODAY, March 26, 2021

- ❖ Although both the Biden and Trump administrations have used Title 42, there are key differences in how it's being implemented. Under the Trump administration, almost every migrant coming to the U.S.-Mexico border was turned away, including children. While adults would typically be expelled to Mexico, children were often put up in hotels and then sent back to their home countries. The Biden administration, on the other hand, has begun admitting migrant children into the U.S., while expelling most families and single adults.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2021/03/26/biden-continues-title-42-immigration-policy-but-now-allows-children/4798100001/>

U.S. Adding 16,000 Emergency Beds For Record-High Number Of Migrant Children Entering Border Custody

By Camilo Montoya-Galvez, CBS News, March 25, 2021

- ❖ By repurposing convention centers, camps for oil workers and military bases, the Biden administration has launched an unprecedented effort to open more than 16,000 emergency beds for migrant children in response to historic numbers of unaccompanied minors entering U.S. border custody. More than 16,500 unaccompanied migrant children were in federal custody as of early Wednesday [Mar. 24]. More than 11,500 of those children were being housed in shelters and emergency housing sites, while another 5,000 were stranded in overcrowded Border Patrol facilities.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/immigration-migrant-children-emergency-beds-border-crisis/>

LATEST STATISTICS

Almost 19,000 Migrant Children Stopped At U.S. Border In March, Most Ever In A Month

By Franco Ordoñez, NPR, April 8, 2021

- ❖ The number of migrants encountered at the U.S.-Mexico border in March was the most in at least 15 years, as agents for U.S. Customs and Border Protection apprehended nearly 172,000 people, according to Biden administration officials. This included nearly 19,000 children and teenagers traveling without a parent.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.npr.org/2021/04/08/985296354/almost-19-000-migrant-children-stopped-at-u-s-border-in-march-most-ever-in-a-mon>

Deportations And Arrests Of Immigrants In The U.S. Illegally Fall Sharply Under Biden

By Michelle Hackman, Wall Street Journal, April 4, 2021

- ❖ ICE's arrests fell by about two-thirds in March compared with the monthly tallies toward the end of the Trump administration, when arrests had already slowed amid the continuing pandemic, the data show. Deportations fell by nearly 50%. And ICE's population of immigrants in detention—which peaked above 56,000 in 2019—fell to 14,000 in March. At the same time, migrant arrests at the U.S. Southern border have reached a 15-year high. The Border Patrol arrested more than 170,000 migrants crossing the Southern border illegally in March, according to a person familiar with the numbers, up from nearly 97,000 in February.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.wsj.com/articles/deportations-and-arrests-of-immigrants-in-the-u-s-illegally-fall-sharply-under-biden-11617544800>

U.S. On Track To Encounter Record 2 Million Migrants On The Southern Border, Government Estimates Show

By Priscilla Alvarez, CNN, March 31, 2021

- ❖ The U.S. is on track to encounter more than 2 million migrants at the U.S.-Mexico border by the end of the 2021 fiscal year [The fiscal year is the accounting period for the federal government which begins on October 1 and ends on September 30]. Data reviewed by CNN shows that up to 1.1 million single adults are expected through September, along with up to around 828,000 families and more than 200,000 unaccompanied children.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.cnn.com/2021/03/31/politics/migrants-us-southern-border/index.html>

Highest Number Of Migrant Children In Border Facilities Since Government Started Releasing Data

By Geneva Sands and Paul LeBlanc, CNN, March 29, 2021

- ❖ There were 5,767 children in Customs and Border Protection custody on Sunday [Mar. 28], up from 5,495 children on Thursday [Mar. 25]. The numbers have gone up each day the data has been released, and Sunday [Mar. 28] marks the most recent data available. The overall number of unaccompanied migrant children in U.S. government custody, however, ticked down slightly from more than 18,000 children last Thursday [Mar. 25] to around 17,650 on [Mar. 28].
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.cnn.com/2021/03/29/politics/migrant-children-border-facilities/index.html>

Family Groups Crossing Border In Soaring Numbers Point To Next Phase Of Crisis

By Nick Miroff and Maria Sacchetti, Washington Post, March 28, 2021

- ❖ DHS expects approximately 500,000 to 800,000 migrants to arrive as part of a family group during the 2021 fiscal year that ends in September, a quantity that would equal or exceed the record numbers who entered in 2019, according to government data. This month, the number of family members taken into U.S. Customs and Border Protection custody is on pace to reach nearly 50,000, up from 7,000 in January, the latest government data show. The highest one-month total, 88,587, was recorded in May 2019, during a year when more than 525,000 migrants arrived as part of a family group.
- ❖ News Article Source: https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/migrant-families-border/2021/03/28/355c59a2-8d70-11eb-aff6-4f720ca2d479_story.html

Over 18,000 Migrant Kids Are Now In U.S. Custody—And The Total Is Growing Every Day

By Joe Walsh, Forbes, March 26, 2021

- ❖ Hundreds of children are crossing the U.S.-Mexico border without their parents every day, with the number of minors in federal custody topping 18,000 by Thursday [Mar. 25], according to federal data. On Thursday [Mar. 25], about 12,500 unaccompanied minors were in the custody of the Department of Health and Human Services, which offers shelter beds and works to place children with parents and other sponsors throughout the United States. Another 5,500 were stuck with Customs and Border Protection.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/joewalsh/2021/03/26/over-18000-migrant-kids-are-now-in-us-custody-and-the-total-is-growing-every-day/?sh=467a414b28b7>

WHY MIGRANTS ARE ARRIVING AT THE U.S. BORDER?

'We're Defeated': Climate Migrants Fleeing Storm-Stricken Central America Struggle To Find Refuge

By Albinson Linares, Noticias Telemundo, April 5, 2021

- ❖ Last year, amid the pandemic, Central Americans endured the formation of 30 cyclones that devastated entire regions and fueled the need to emigrate. In Honduras, Eta and Iota left more than 250,000 people last year with hardly any possibility of accessing services of any kind, including health. About 34 people emigrate every hour from Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador, according to a report by the Franciscan Network for Migrants. The countries are plagued by violence, poverty and political instability, but "the new faces" of this exodus are "climate migrants" from Honduras who leave after being left "homeless, jobless and without crops," said Rubén Figueroa, a member of the Mesoamerican Migrant Movement.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/latino/central-american-climate-migrants-face-countless-barriers-seeking-refu-rcna525>

What's Driving The Surge At The Southern Border?

By Giovanni Russonello, New York Times, April 5, 2021

- ❖ The most immediate cause of the immigration surge may be the series of deadly hurricanes that swept through Central America last year, part of a greater trend fueled by climate change. They destroyed crops and homes, especially in Honduras, leaving an estimated nine million people displaced. The Covid-19 pandemic has devastated both urban and rural communities in the region, and has made it doubly perilous to undertake a long journey.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/05/us/politics/biden-immigration-crisis.html>

ASYLUM SEEKERS

'Don't Put Your Kids' Lives At Risk': U.S. Ramps Up Ad Campaign In Latin America Fighting Against Disinformation

By Priscilla Alvarez, CNN, April 3, 2021

- ❖ The Biden administration has placed around 28,000 radio ads in Latin America as part of a stepped-up campaign to discourage people from journeying to the U.S. But amid a dramatic spike in migrants to the southern border, many of whom have been lured by false information and rumors from smugglers, it's not clear the ads are resonating.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.cnn.com/2021/04/03/politics/border-radio-ad-campaign-latin-america-smugglers/index.html>

Migrants Freed Without Court Notice — Sometimes No Paperwork

By Elliot Spagat, Associated Press, April 1, 2021

- ❖ Overwhelmed and underprepared, U.S. authorities are releasing migrant families on the Mexican border without notices to appear in immigration court or sometimes without any paperwork at all — time-saving moves that have left some migrants confused.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/wireStory/migrant-families-freed-court-notice-paperwork-76804921>

Guatemala Declares Emergency Measures Amid Reports Of New Honduras Migrant Caravan

By the Associated Press, March 30, 2021

- ❖ Guatemalan President Alejandro Giammattei declared a “state of prevention” Monday [Mar. 29] along the country’s border with Honduras amid reports that a new migrant caravan may be forming there. The emergency decree restricts open-air gatherings and demonstrations without permits, and will be in effect for two weeks in the five Guatemalan provinces along the Honduran border.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.latimes.com/world-nation/story/2021-03-30/guatemala-declares-emergency-measures-new-caravan-rumored>

Migrant Caravan Of Hundreds Departs In Honduras For United States

By Reuters, March 30, 2021

- ❖ Several hundred Hondurans set off for the Guatemalan border on Tuesday [Mar. 30], seeking to reach the United States to escape the impact of the coronavirus pandemic and natural disasters, according to local media and a Reuters witness. The group of migrants was the second large caravan to set out from Honduras this year, on the heels of catastrophic flooding in November from hurricanes Eta and Iota.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.usnews.com/news/world/articles/2021-03-30/migrant-caravan-of-hundreds-departs-in-honduras-for-united-states>

More Than Half Of All Migrants At U.S.-Mexico Border Expelled Under Health Order In Recent Weeks

By Geneva Sands, CNN, March 25, 2021

- ❖ Of the some 103,000 migrants encountered by Customs and Border Protection in the three weeks through March 17, more than 61,000 were expelled under the health authority known as "Title 42." Around 41,800 were allowed to remain in the U.S.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.cnn.com/2021/03/25/politics/migrants-us-mexico-border-expelled-health-order/index.html>

DETENTION CENTERS

An ICE Detention Center In Arizona Used Excessive Force And Chemical Agents Against Immigrants, A Watchdog Report Alleges

By Kelly McLaughlin and Michelle Mark, Insider, April 1, 2021

- ❖ An immigration facility in Arizona used excessive force, verbally abused immigrants, and neglected their medical needs, according to the Department of Homeland Security's inspector general. A team from the inspector general's office inspected the La Palma Correctional Center in Eloy, Arizona, between August and November of 2020 and "identified serious concerns regarding detainee care and treatment," according to a report. The report said facility staff used chemical agents — including pepper spray, pepper balls, and other agents — against protesting detainees.
- ❖ To read the report, go to: <https://www.oig.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/assets/2021-04/OIG-21-30-Mar21.pdf>
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.insider.com/arizona-immigration-detention-facility-neglected-migrants-dhs-report-2021-4>

SHELTERS FOR MIGRANT CHILDREN

More Than 1,300 Migrant Children Being Cared For At Freeman Coliseum

By David Ibañez and Steven Cavazos, KSAT News, April 7, 2021

- ❖ The number of unaccompanied migrant children being housed at the Freeman Expo Center has increased from 500 to 1,370, federal and county officials said Tuesday [Apr. 6]. Initially, 500 males ages 13-17 were bused on March 29 from El Paso to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Emergency Intake Site in San Antonio. As of Monday [Apr. 5], 1,370 children were being cared for at the EIS, where they are eventually released to a sponsor or transferred to an appropriate HHS Office of Refugee Resettlement shelter for longer-term care. The Expo Center has an internal potential capacity of 2,100 beds and an external capacity of 300 medical beds.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.ksat.com/news/local/2021/04/06/more-than-1300-migrant-children-being-cared-for-at-freeman-coliseum/>

Long Beach Convention Center Expected To Be Used As Shelter For Migrant Children

By Leanne Suter, ABC7 News, April 6, 2021

- ❖ The city of Long Beach may soon allow its convention center to temporarily shelter up to 1,000 migrant children, city officials said Monday [April 6]. The federal government is asking local communities throughout the country to help with sheltering unaccompanied minors who are currently housed in overcrowded Border Patrol facilities. If approved, the Long Beach Convention Center would temporarily house up to 1,000 children for a period of 90 to 120 days.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://abc7.com/long-beach-convention-center-migrant-children-shelter-city-of/10488763/>

'No Place For A Child': Inside The Tent Camp Housing Thousands Of Migrant Children

By Miriam Jordan, The New York Times, March 30, 2021

- ❖ Migrant children and families are sleeping shoulder to shoulder on mats in the Donna, Texas border facility designed for 250 people that is now holding more than 4,100. The United States currently has more than 17,600 beds for the minors in tent camps, emergency facilities and shelters, according to the internal documents. The administration is projecting it will need more than 35,500 beds by the end of May. There are more than 12,000 migrant children presently in government shelters. Another 5,160 are stranded in Border Patrol processing facilities like the one at Donna because there are not enough vacant beds to accommodate them all, and children already in roomier shelters operated by the Department of Health and Human Services are not being released quickly enough to make room for hundreds more crossing the border every day.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/30/us/texas-border-facility-migrants.html>

'Bring The Immigrant Children.' Miami Democrat Wilson Pushes To Reopen Homestead Center

By Alex Daugherty, Miami Herald, March 30, 2021

- ❖ Miami Democratic Rep. Frederica Wilson favors reopening the Homestead Detention Center for migrant children. In an interview, Wilson said the Homestead facility could help handle an influx of unaccompanied immigrant children who have already overwhelmed existing facilities along the U.S.-Mexico border, causing some children to remain in Customs and Border Patrol custody for much longer than they're supposed to. She also supports opening smaller facilities run by organizations like Catholic Charities in South Florida to house children who are primarily from Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras as they wait to be placed with a sponsor or in foster care.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.miamiherald.com/news/local/immigration/article250289090.html>

Migrant Children Expected To Begin Arriving At Freeman Coliseum In San Antonio

By Joshua Fechter, San Antonio Express-News, March 29, 2021

- ❖ Unaccompanied migrant children who have made their way to the U.S.-Mexico border in recent weeks were expected to arrive Monday [Mar. 29] night at a federally run shelter set up at Freeman Coliseum, Bexar County Judge Nelson Wolff said. Officials said the first group will include 500 boys — all minors, mostly ages 13 to 17 — who will be housed in the 200,000-square-foot Expo Hall where 2,100 cots have been set up. Another 300 beds have been set aside in a separate facility on the grounds to house any children who test positive for COVID-19, officials said.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.expressnews.com/news/local/article/Migrant-children-expected-to-begin-arriving-at-16062382.php>

First Buses With Migrant Girls Arrive At San Diego Convention Center

By Kate Morrissey, San Diego Tribune-Union, March 28, 2021

- ❖ The first unaccompanied migrant children arrived at the San Diego Convention Center late Saturday [Mar. 27]. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services said it would receive roughly 500 teenage girls on the facility's first day in operation. As of Saturday [Mar. 27], about 12,270 children were in the Office of Refugee Resettlement's custody after being transferred from Customs and Border Protection, most from Border Patrol. Last month, Border Patrol agents apprehended nearly 9,300 children crossing the border, most in Texas and Arizona.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/news/immigration/story/2021-03-28/first-buses-with-migrant-girls-arrive-at-san-diego-convention-center>

Administration Signs Off On Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland Housing Migrant Children

By Benjamin Wermund, Sig Christenson, Scott Huddleston, San Antonio Express-News, March 25, 2021

- ❖ The Biden administration is moving forward with plans to house thousands of migrant children at two temporary shelters in San Antonio — at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, and possibly Freeman Coliseum, officials said on Thursday [Mar. 25]. The Pentagon has not said how many children will be housed at Lackland or when they would arrive. In a tweet, U.S. Sen. John Cornyn, R-Texas, said as many as 350 children will stay at a Lackland dormitory and another 5,000 at Fort Bliss, near El Paso. As many as 2,400 children will be housed at Freeman, he said. But that arrangement wasn't a done deal.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.expressnews.com/news/legislature/article/JBSA-Lackland-to-temporarily-house-migrant-16052764.php>

Migrant Children Might Be Sent To Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland And Fort Bliss

By Sig Christenson, San Antonio Express-News, March 23, 2021

- ❖ Some of the overflow of children being detained at the U.S.-Mexico border are likely to be brought to Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland and Fort Bliss, Pentagon spokesman John Kirby said. It was unclear how many children would be housed on the military installations and when they were to arrive. The Biden administration is struggling to house thousands of unaccompanied teenagers and children arriving at the border in record numbers, more than 500 a day.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.expressnews.com/news/local/article/Migrant-children-might-be-sent-to-Joint-Base-San-16048247.php>

COURT RULINGS

Bill In Washington State Would Ban Private Immigration Jail

By Gene Johnson, Associated Press, March 30, 2021

- ❖ The Washington Legislature has approved a bill aimed at shutting down one of the country's largest for-profit, privately run immigration jails. Led by majority Democrats, the state Senate voted 28-21 in favor of a measure that would ban for-profit detention centers in the state. The only facility that meets that definition is the Northwest detention center in Tacoma, a 1,575-bed immigration jail operated by the GEO Group under a contract with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. The Northwest detention center currently houses fewer than 200 detainees due to pandemic-related precautions, said Matt Adams, legal director at the Northwest Immigrant Rights Project. The bill would allow GEO to continue operating the jail until its contract with ICE expires in 2025.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://abcnews.go.com/US/wireStory/bill-washington-state-ban-private-immigration-jail-76776729>

Judge Dana Marks On How The Biden Administration Can Address Immigration Backlogs

By NPR, March 26, 2021

- ❖ NPR's Steve Inskeep talks to Judge Dana Marks of the National Association of Immigration Judges about the massive backlog facing immigration judges.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.npr.org/2021/03/26/981486753/judge-dana-marks-on-how-the-biden-administration-can-address-immigration-backlog>

BORDER WALL

The Biden Administration Says It May Restart Construction Of The Border Wall To Fill 'Gaps'

By Thomas Colson, Insider, April 7, 2021

- ❖ Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas this week told colleagues that some construction may be resumed along the border wall in order to plug some "gaps" in the barrier between Mexico and the United States. He said areas, where construction may be resumed, could include gaps, gates, and areas where the wall had been built but planned technology had not been installed.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.businessinsider.com/biden-restart-border-wall-construction-trump-pledge-gaps-2021-4>

Biden Should Finish The Wall

By Bret Stephens, New York Times, April 5, 2021

- ❖ A well-built wall should still be a central part of an overall immigration fix. It's an imperfect but functional deterrent against the most reckless forms of border crossing. It's a barrier against sudden future surges of mass migration. U.S. agents apprehended 170,000 migrants along the southwest border in March, a 70 percent jump over February's numbers and the highest level in 15 years.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/05/opinion/biden-border-wall.html>

DEVELOPING STORIES

SA Immigrants' Rights Advocacy Groups Call For Transparency After Freeman Coliseum Visit

By Jakob Rodriguez and Jessie Degollado, KSAT News, April 11, 2021

- ❖ Organizers from San Antonio immigrants' rights advocates and community organizers, including the Texas Organizing Project, SA Stands, and the Immigrant Legal Resource Center spoke out Sunday following the tour of the coliseum, which was arranged by Congressman Joaquin Castro. Currently, the Freeman Coliseum's Expo Hall is being used to house more than 1,800 migrant children. The visit by the group comes after Gov. Greg Abbott reported allegations of sexual abuse, understaffing and COVID-related concerns at the facility. Coalition members said during a news conference [Apr. 11] that they are fighting for the children to have faster reunification times with family members and are asking for federal agencies to be more transparent about the facility's happenings and COVID-19 numbers.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.ksat.com/news/local/2021/04/11/watch-live-sa-immigrants-rights-advocate-groups-visit-freeman-coliseum-following-allegations/>

The Border Patrol's New Migrant Child Care Cadre

By John Burnett, NPR, April 6, 2021

- ❖ Last Friday [Apr. 2], the sprawling Border Patrol Training Academy in Artesia, N.M., graduated 39 young men and women. They'll be assigned to work inside stations to care for the more than 5,000 individuals whom agents are apprehending every day. This is the first class of Border Patrol processing coordinators.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.npr.org/2021/04/06/984694953/the-border-patrols-new-migrant-child-care-cadre>

Human Smugglers Use Facebook To Connect With Migrants And Spread False Hope Of Reaching U.S.

By Julia Ainsley and Didi Martinez, NBC News, April 5, 2021

- ❖ Human smugglers are openly advertising their services on Facebook, falsely telling Central Americans interested in crossing illegally into the United States that they can promise a "100 percent" safe journey. "Travel to Mexico to the United States. Costs \$8,000. 100 percent safe," reads a recent post written in Spanish. "Cross through Matamoros. You walk one hour, after in automobile until you arrive to your relative."
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/immigration/human-smugglers-use-facebook-connect-migrants-spread-false-hope-reaching-n1262984>

Biden Administration Considers Overhaul Of Asylum System At Southern Border

By Franco Ordoñez, NPR, April 1, 2021

- ❖ President Biden's top advisers promise "long-needed systemic reforms" to address a backlog of more than 1 million asylum cases in the immigration court system, which often keeps people applying for asylum waiting years to resolve their cases. The plan the Biden administration is considering to speed up the process would take some asylum cases from the southern border out of the hands of the overloaded immigration courts under the Department of Justice. Instead, it would handle them under the purview of the Department of Homeland Security.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.npr.org/2021/04/01/982795844/biden-administration-considers-overhaul-of-asylum-system-at-southern-border>

Immigration Policy Manual Under A Biden Administration Plan

By Hamed Aleaziz, BuzzFeed News, March 30, 2021

- ❖ United States Citizenship and Immigration Services officials are planning to remove references to immigrants as "aliens" in the agency's policy manual more than a year after the term was inserted into the guidance during the Trump administration. Now, officials are looking to replace "alien" with "noncitizen" as much as possible throughout the manual.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/hamedaleaziz/alien-policy-manual-uscis-biden>

U.S. Will Issue Proposal To Preserve Program For 'Dreamer' Immigrants: DHS

By Reuters Staff, Reuters, March 26, 2021

- ❖ The U.S. Department of Homeland Security said on Mar. 26 it will issue a proposed rule to preserve and fortify a program for immigrants, nicknamed "Dreamers," who are living illegally in the United States after entering as children.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.reuters.com/article/idUSKBN2BJ00K>

Biden Wants To Ramp Up Expulsions Of Migrant Families, But Most Are Being Allowed To Stay

By Camilo Montoya-Galvez and Nicole Sganga, CBS News, March 26, 2021

- ❖ U.S. agents in south Texas are not expelling Central American families with children younger than seven years of age to Mexico, according to a senior Border Patrol official. On Thursday [Mar. 25], for example, about 6,000 migrants entered U.S. custody along the southern border, including approximately 2,200 parents and children traveling as families, according to figures provided by Customs and Border Protection (CBP). About 86% of the families CBP encountered Thursday [Mar. 25] were processed under U.S. immigration law and not expelled, CBP said. Most are being released into U.S. communities, tested for COVID-19 and allowed to live in the country while they continue their deportation proceedings, which can be halted if they are granted asylum.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/immigration-migrant-families-at-border-allowed-to-stay-under-biden/?ftag=CNM-00-10aac3a>



A girl from Honduras holds a sign asking President Joe Biden to let her in during a migrant demonstration demanding clearer U.S. migration policies at the San Ysidro crossing port in Tijuana, Mexico.

Credit: Guillermo Arias/AFP/Getty Images